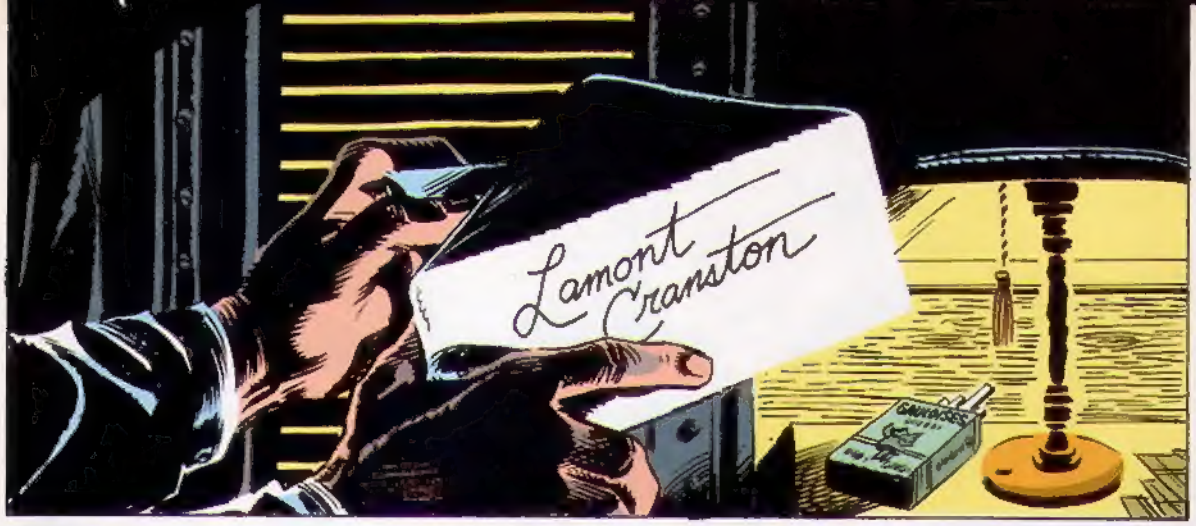
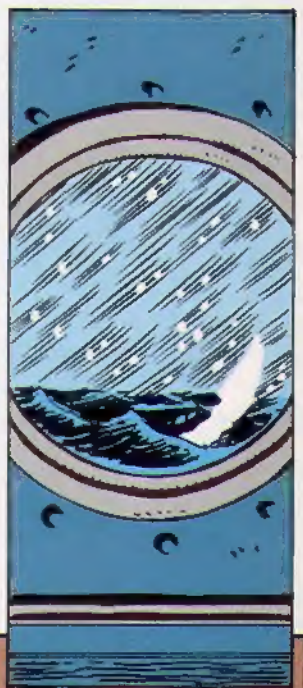
THE Shadow STRIKES!
SHADOW STRIKES
16
FEB 91
US $1.75
CAN $2.25
UK£1
so BEAUTIFUL...
so DEADLY!
by Gerard Jones, Rod Whigham & Gerry Fernandez



Your presence is required at a very special ceremony.
123 West 52nd Street, New York. Two A.M., December 16, 1935. Season's Greetings.
Number One



BEASTLY WEATHER. FEEL AS THOUGH I HAVEN'T SEEN A WOMAN'S LEG IN A MONTH.
ODALISQUE
BILLY VIOLET'S AQUAPADES
ONE HUNDRED BATHING BEAUTIES
SPECIAL APP. JOHNNY HEIMENWEISER
9235E

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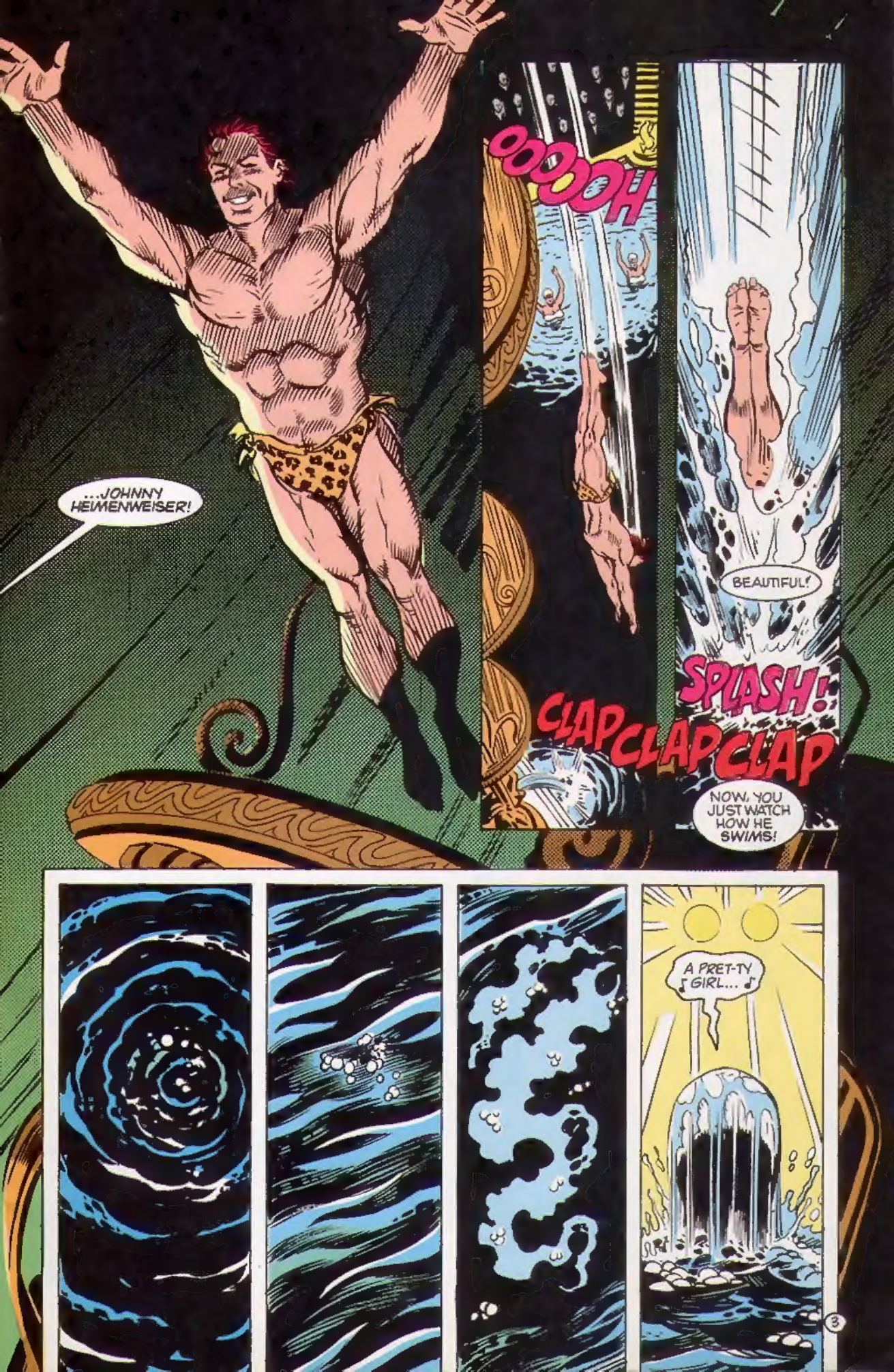
...NOT COUNTING MY WIFE'S, OF COURSE. WHICH I DON'T.
WELL, TONIGHT SHOULD TAKE CARE OF THAT.
BULLY SEATS YOU GOT US, LOVELOCK! WE'LL BE WITHIN PINCHING DISTANCE!
I'VE TOLD YOU, WESTON--MAKE FRIENDS WITH ACTORS AND AGENTS. AND NOT FOR TICKETS, EITHER.
THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO MEET PRETTY YOUNG THINGS.
HOW ABOUT YOU, CRANSTON? STILL NO SWEET LITTLE NUMBER DRAINING YOUR BANK ACCOUNT, EH?
BAH. AN UNMARRIED MAN WITH NO MISTRESS. WHAT COULD BE WORSE... EXCEPT A MARRIED MAN WITH NO MISTRESS! HA!
"WELL, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND A LITTLE SOMETHING HERE. IN THESE HARD TIMES, I'M SURE PLENTY OF THESE GIRLS NEED HELP WITH THEIR RENT, EH? HA-HA!"
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I'M BILLY VIOLET... AND I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING MY SHOW!
I'D NOW LIKE YOU TO MEET OUR FEATURED GUEST... OLYMPIC DIVER AND HOLLYWOOD STAR...
RCA
2


...JOHNNY HEIMENWEISER!
OOOOH
BEAUTIFUL!
SPLASH!
CLAP CLAP CLAP
NOW, YOU JUST WATCH HOW HE SWIMS!
A PRET-TY GIRL...
3

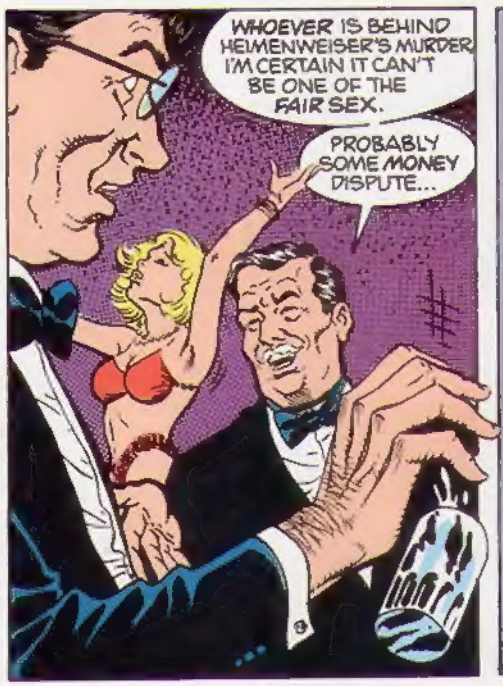
GERARD JONES WRITER • ROD WHIGHAM PENCILLER • GERRY FERNANDEZ INKER • BOB PINAHA LETTERER • ANTHONY TOLLIN COLORIST • BRIAN AUGUSTYN NUMBERONE

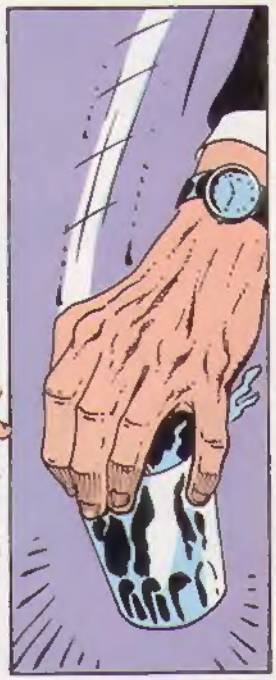
NOBODY? YOUR STAR GETS GUTTED LIKE A FISH IN FRONT O' TWO THOUSAND PAYING CUSTOMERS AND NOBODY SAW WHERE THE KILLERS WENT?
STAGE TRANCE
THE LIGHTS WERE DOWN! MY GIRLS WERE SCREAMIN'! EVERYBODY WAS STARIN' AT THE POOL! BY THE TIME ANYBODY GOT BACKSTAGE--
AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT! BUT NOBODY LEAVES THIS DUMP UNTIL--
OF COURSE YOU'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION FOR OUR PARTY, INSPECTOR.
COMMISSIONER?
UH...SURE THING, COMMISSIONER. IF... IF I'D KNOWN YOU WERE HERE...
...THERE, DARLING. YOU'RE VERY UPSET. LET UNCLE ARTHUR LOOK AFTER YOU THIS EVENING.
SCENE #3
REALLY, WESTON. YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GET US OUT THAT QUICKLY!
LOVELOCK, YOU DOG! HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH, AT YOUR AGE?
FOR GOD'S SAKE, WESTON. MY LEG-SHOW WAS CUT SHORT! LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN SEE AT 'BAMA'S, EH?
HOW'S THAT SOUND TO YOU, CRANSTON?
5

CRANSTON?
LOOK... I HEARD YOU OWED HEIMENWEISER SOME DOUGH...
COME ALONG! YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT IT IN THE TABLOIDS TOMORROW! WE'RE HEADING FOR 'BAMA'S!
HAVEN'T SEEN THAT OLD GAL FOR YEARS. MY, MY...
HELLO, 'BAMA. YOU'VE GOT FIVE CHAPS NEEDING SOME REAL DISTRACTION TONIGHT.
I'LL SEND SOME NICE GIRLS BY. WON'T BE VALERIE TONIGHT, THOUGH.
HIYA, PIGEONS!
SHE BACKED INTO A SIZZLING PLATTER.
WELL, I'LL TRUST YOUR TASTE. ALWAYS DID, YOU KNOW.
GOOD OLD 'BAMA. SHE KNOWS HER MEN. AND SHE KNOWS HOW TO TAKE IT ON THE CHIN, TOO.

STILL CAN'T GET OVER HEIMENWEISER. KILLED BY WOMEN, NO LESS!
VAMPIRES.
THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL ARE. THIRSTING TO BLEED YOU DRY. ANY MAN WHO TANGLES WITH THEM... DESERVES WHAT HE GETS.

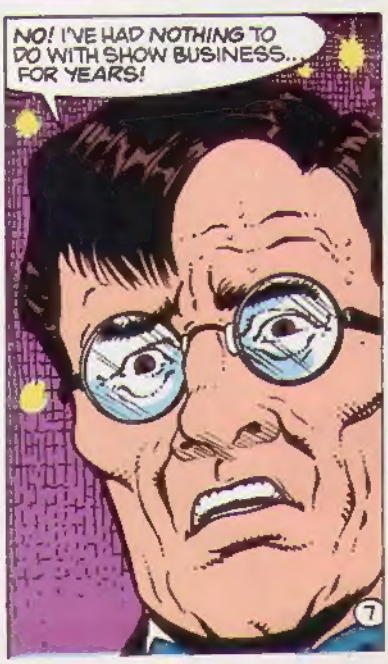
OH, YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT, POOLE! SUCH SOFT, HELPLESS THINGS!
OOH!
DEAR LORD..


WHOEVER IS BEHIND HEIMENWEISER'S MURDER I'M CERTAIN IT CAN'T BE ONE OF THE FAIR SEX.
PROBABLY SOME MONEY DISPUTE...



YOU SEEM AWFULLY NERVOUS, BOCK.
THIS...THIS HAS UPSET ME... TERRIBLY.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY INVOLVEMENT WITH THIS SHOW, DID YOU, BOCK?
I RECALL YOU FINANCING ONE OF BILLY VIOLET'S PRODUCTIONS, ONCE.

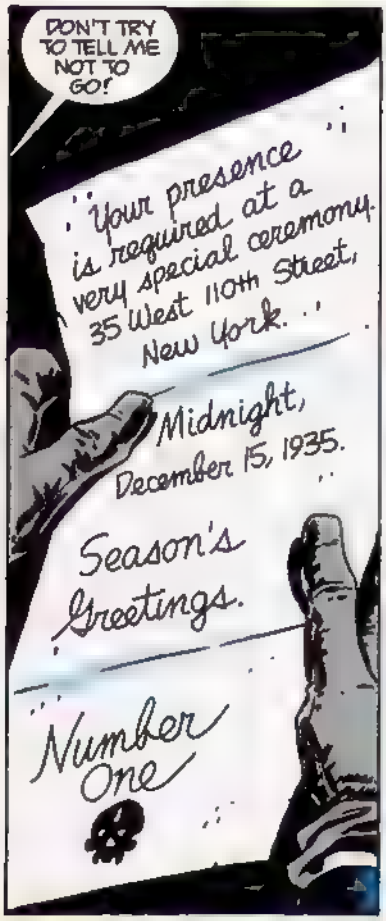

NO! I'VE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH SHOW BUSINESS... FOR YEARS!
7

WELL, THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO MEET CHORUS GIRLS...HMM?
EASIER JUST TO VISIT TRANSYLVANIA.
I...I DON'T BELIEVE I'M FIT FOR COMPANY TONIGHT. I SHOULD GO HOME.
HOME?! GOOD GOD, MAN...
I THINK I'LL FOLLOW BOCK'S EXAMPLE. THE EVENTS OF THIS EVENING HAVE BEEN FAIRLY...UNSETTLING.
NOTHING WRONG WITH THE SERVICE, I HOPE.
NO, 'BAMA, NO. I'M AFRAID MY FRIENDS JUST AREN'T THE GAY BLADES THEY USED TO BE. GETTING SOUR, TWID, TIRED...
...EVEN CRANSTON!
JUST NOT LIKE THE GOOD OLD DAYS... IS IT, PEACHES?
Bam
FLOOR
8

HARRIS? IS THAT YOU?
DECIDED TO COME HOME, DID YOU?
ONLY...ONLY FOR A MOMENT, DEAR. I NEED TO PICK SOMETHING UP. THEN I'LL BE... GOING OUT AGAIN.
OUT? WHERE? WITH WHOM?
WHO ARE YOU GOING TO SEE, HARRIS?
WILL YOU JUST LEAVE ME TO SUFFER AGAIN? TO GUESS?
OF COURSE YOU WILL. YOU'RE A MAN!

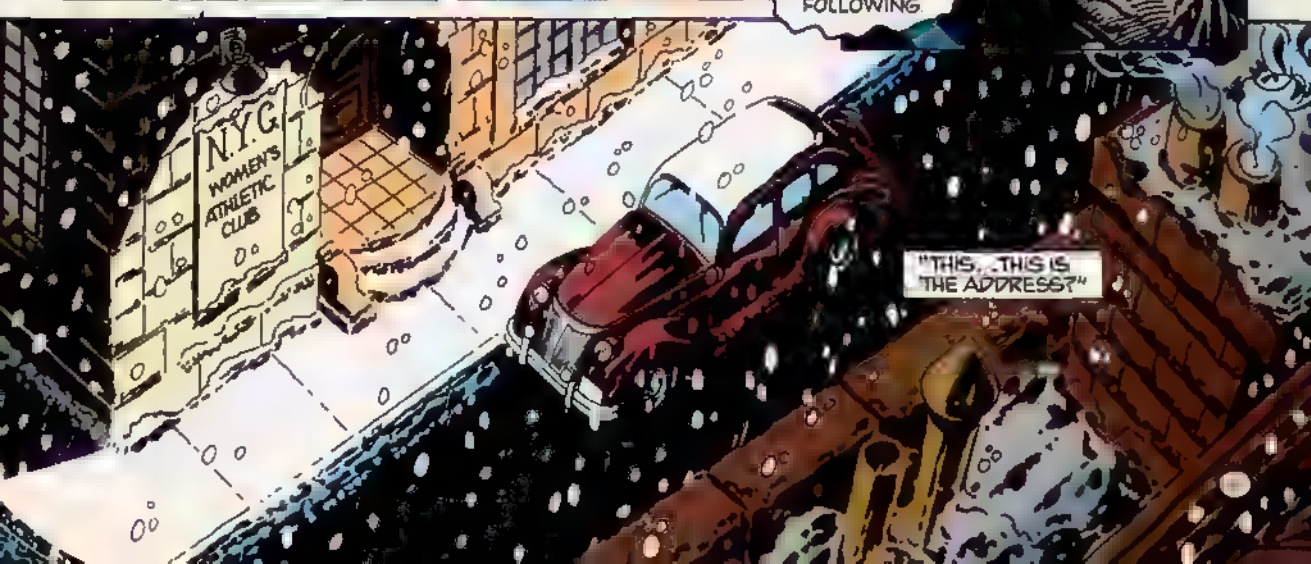
WH-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I WANT TO HELP YOU, HARRIS BOCK
NO! NO, YOU DON'T! YOU WANT TO KILL ME! YOU'RE WITH NUMBER ONE!
THE SHADOW IS WITH NO ONE.
AND I KNOW OF NO... "NUMBER ONE"

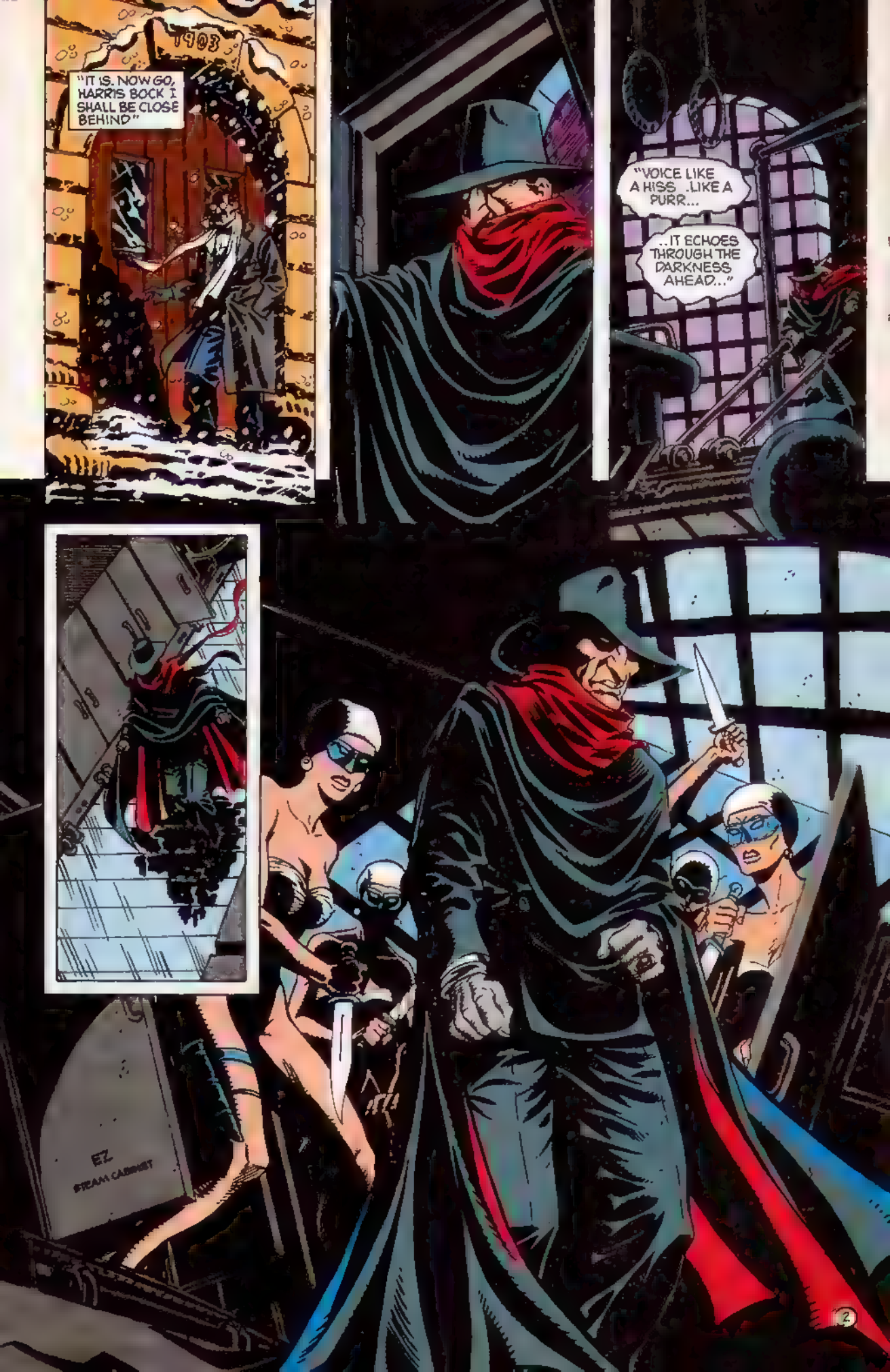
HE... HE SAYS HE HAS TO SEE ME. I'VE BEEN PAYING HIM.. BLACKMAIL. I... I HAD SOME DIFFICULTY... MISSED ONE PAYMENT, AND NOW...
LET ME SEE.


DON'T TRY TO TELL ME NOT TO GO!
Your presence is required at a very special ceremony. 35 West 110th Street, New York.
Midnight, December 15, 1935.
Season's Greetings.
Number One

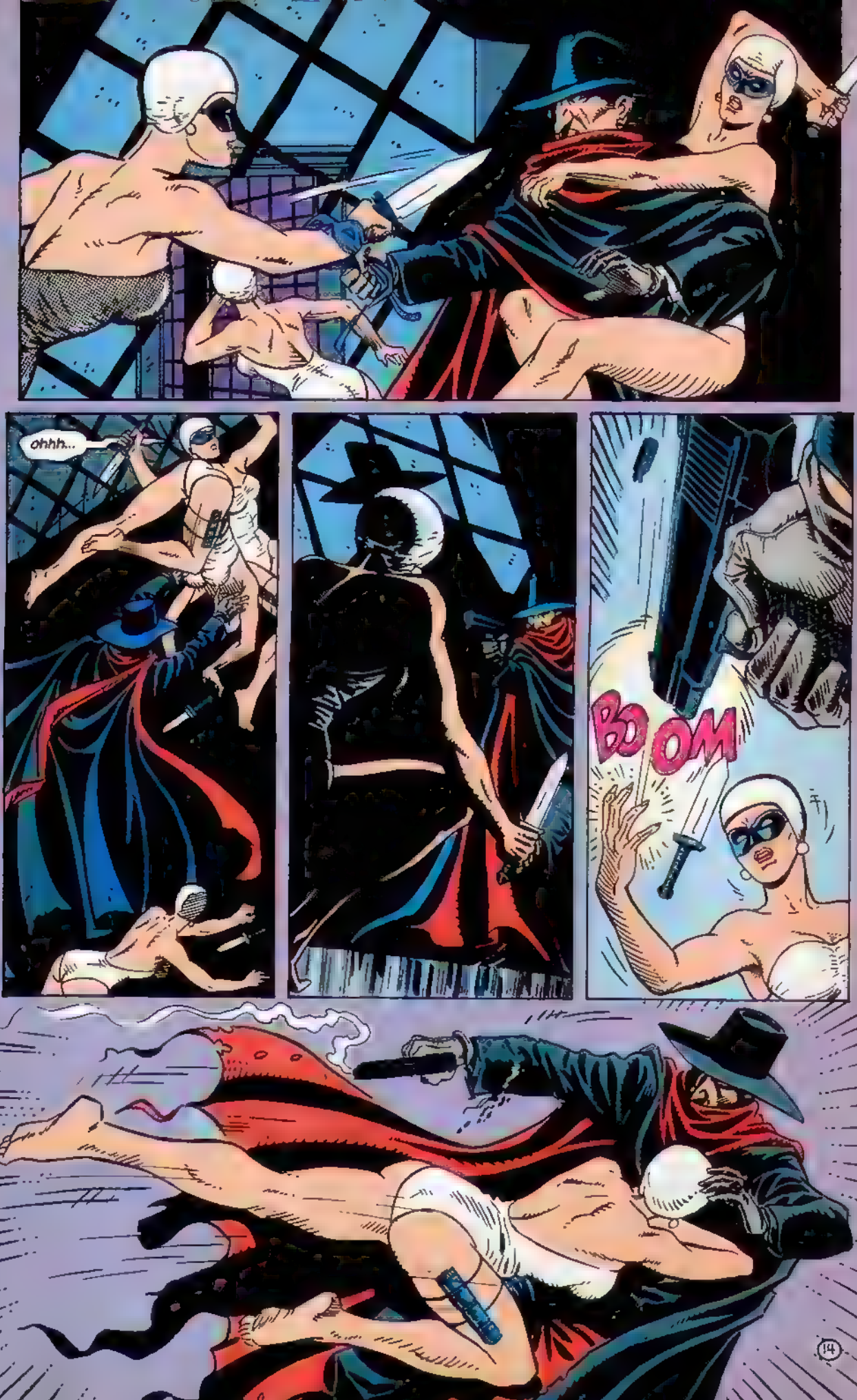
HE KILLED JOHNNY HEIMENWEISER!
NUMBER ONE CALLED ME ONCE.. HE WARNED ME ABOUT HIS GIRLS! OH, HE'S A TERRIBLE CREATURE! A VOICE LIKE A HISS, LIKE A PURR, LIKE A...

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF TELLING YOU NOT TO GO. YOU MUST GO
BUT I SHALL BE FOLLOWING.


N.Y.C. WOMEN'S ATHLETIC CLUB
"THIS... THIS IS THE ADDRESS?"

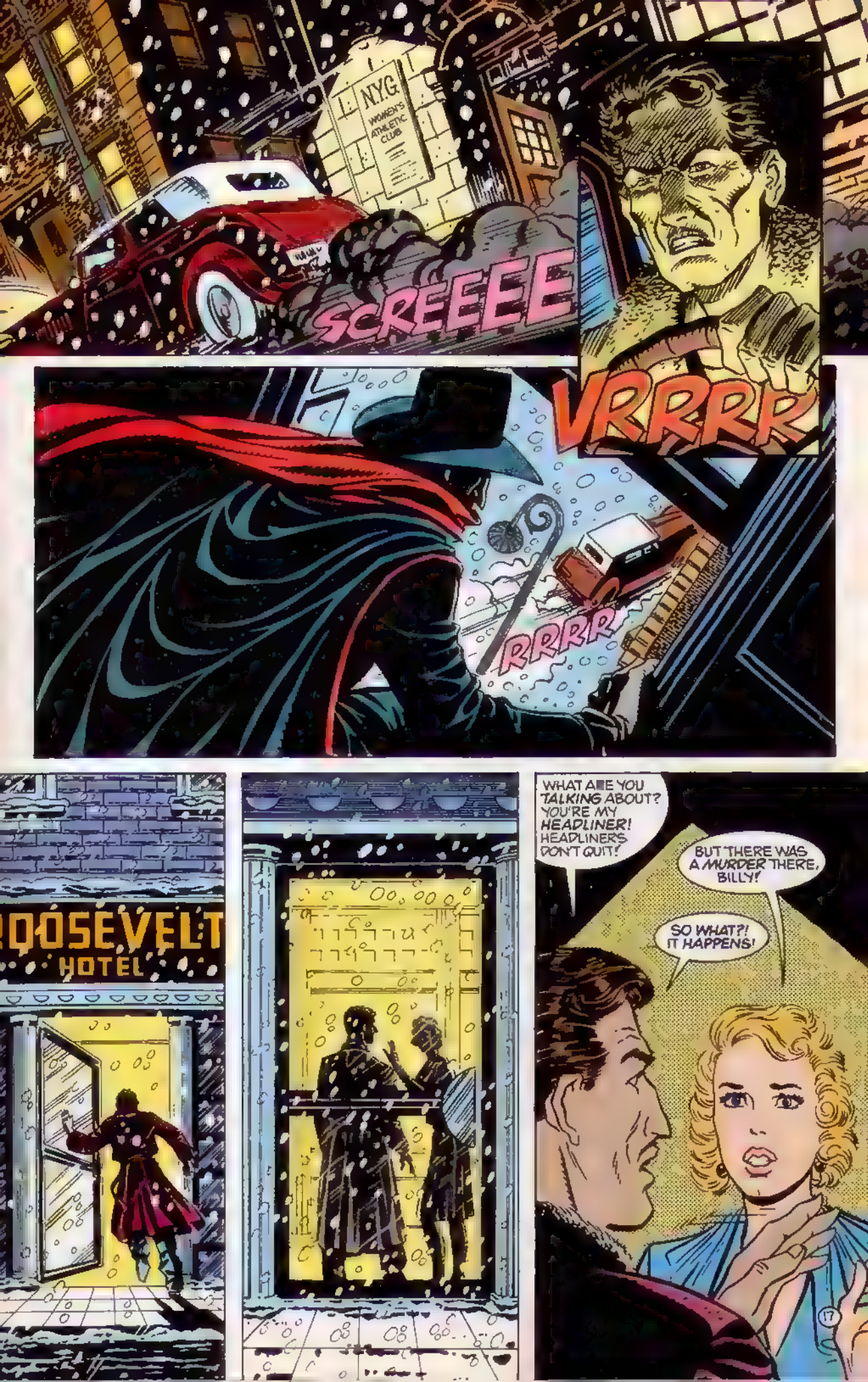

1903
"IT IS. NOW GO, HARRIS BOCK I SHALL BE CLOSE BEHIND"
"VOICE LIKE A HISS ..LIKE A PURR...
..IT ECHOES THROUGH THE DARKNESS AHEAD..."
EZ
STEAM CABINET

EEEEE!


ohhh...
BO OM

SO...
...CAN'T HURT A LITTLE GIRL, HMM?
WHO SAYS CHIVALRY IS.. DEAD?
BAM

BOOM
SPAAK
THE ECHO OF FOOTSTEPS..
..THEN SILENCE..
..ONLY SILENCE.
POO
12 FEET

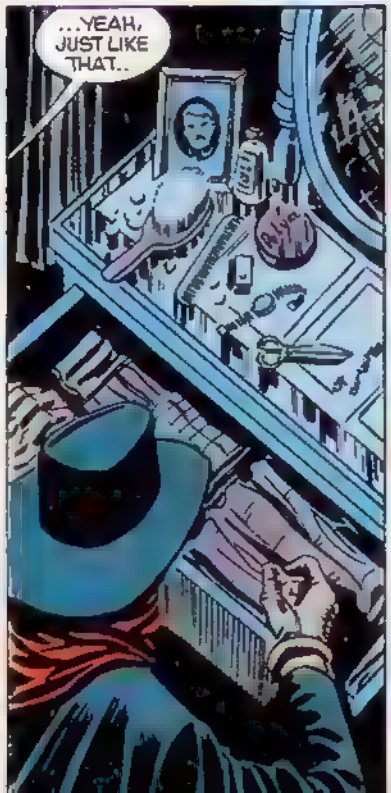

N.Y.G.
WOMEN'S ATHLETIC CLUB
SCREEEE
VRRRR
RRRR
HOTEL
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE MY HEADLINER! HEADLINERS DON'T QUIT!
BUT THERE WAS A MURDER THERE, BILLY!
SO WHAT?! IT HAPPENS!
17

LOOK WHO MADE YOU, HUH? YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO 'BAMA'S? THAT WHAT YOU WANT? SITTING IN SUGAR-DADDIES' LAPS, IS THAT IT?
WELL, STIFF ME TOMORROW AND THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
I KNOW ENOUGH GUYS IN THIS TOWN TO MAKE SURE YOU NEVER GET ANY REAL WORK AGAIN!
CRIPES. I NEED A DRINK.
DAMES... WHAT ARE YOU GONNA...
...WHO ARE YOU?
DON'T YOU REMEMBER, MR VIOLET? I WAS LOOKING FOR A JOB AND YOU TOLD ME...
OH, YEAH, YEAH WANT A DRINK?
OH, MR VIOLET, I WAS AFRAID YOU WEREN'T COMING! I REALLY NEED THIS JOB, MR. VIOLET. I CAN'T FIND ANYTHING, AND--
23
8

RELAX, KID. RELAX. I CAN ALWAYS FIND A SPOT FOR A SWEET COOKIE LIKE YOU. AND IF YOU REALLY GOT IT...
...I MIGHT HAVE A HEADLINER SPOT OPENING UP

NOW... LET'S SEE WHAT YOU GOT.

THAT'S IT, DOLL...

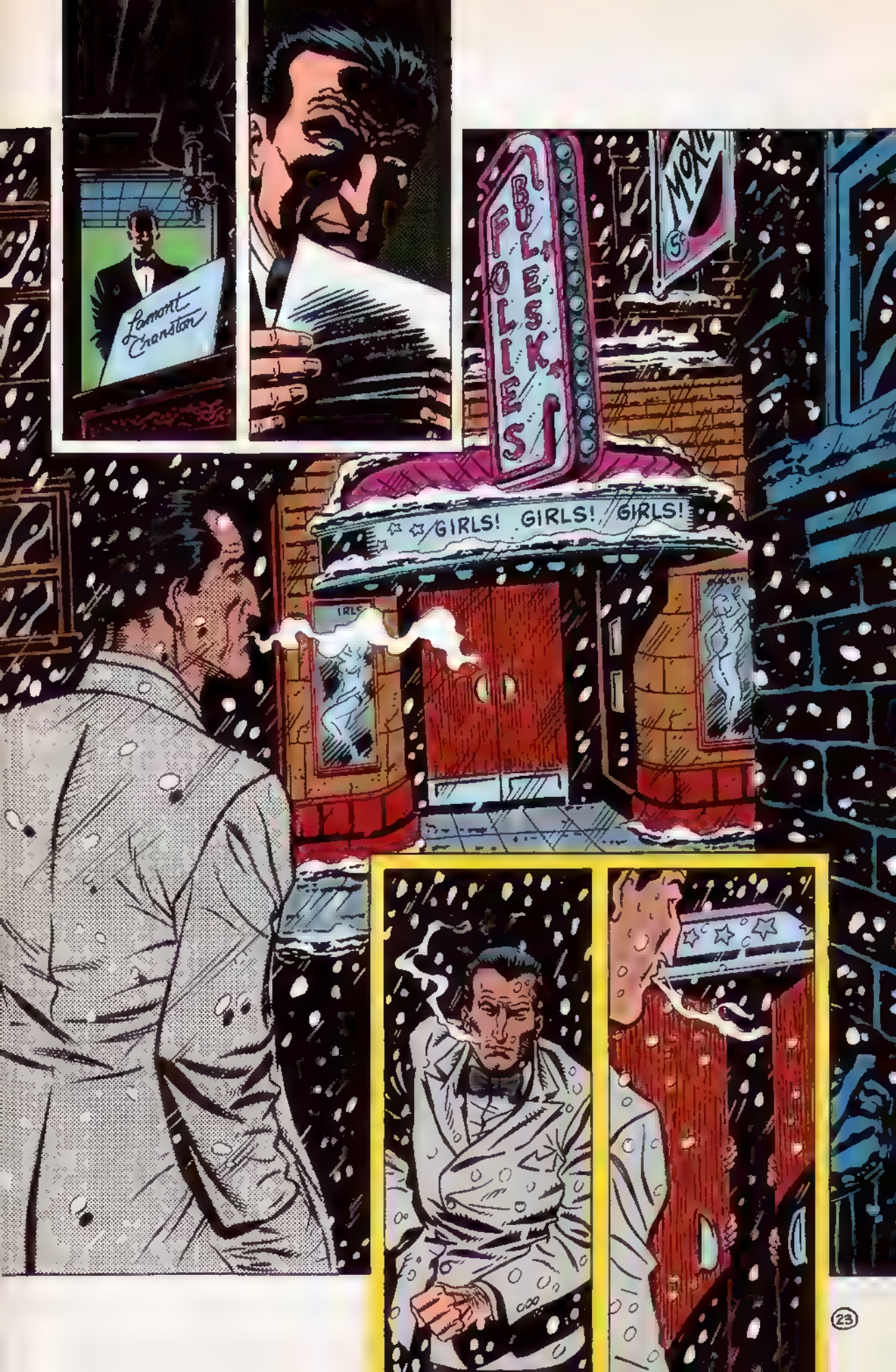

...YEAH, JUST LIKE THAT..

19

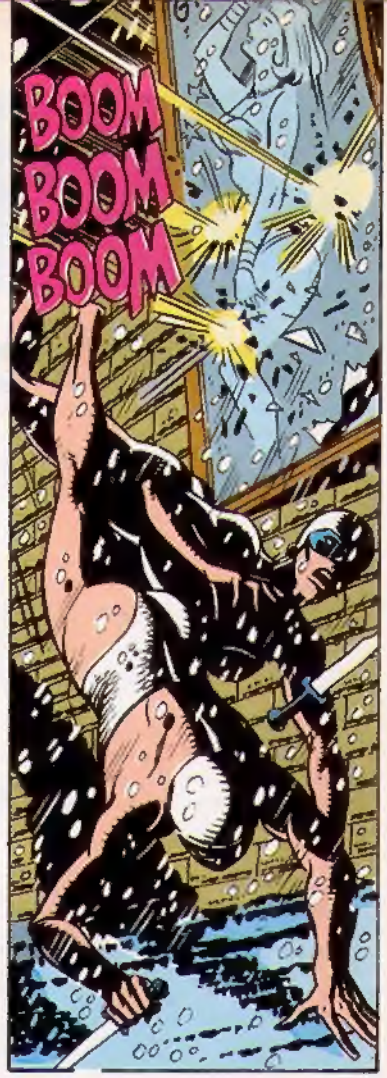
HEIMENWEISER
VIOLET
BOCK
LOVELOCK
CRANSTON
CRANSTON
B.V.
THAT WAS NICE, KID.
NOW, WHERE THE HELL IS MY.
. HUH.
I MUST BE JUMPIER'N I THOUGHT.
20

WELL, GOOD EVENING, SIR! WE WEREN'T EXPECTING YOU THIS EVENING.
WILL YOU BE STAYING THE NIGHT, SIR?
BALT CLUB
PERHAPS AFTER I DUCK OUT ON A SHORT ERRAND HAVE A BRANDY ALEXANDER SENT TO MY APARTMENT, WILL YOU?
YES, SIR BUT IF THERE'S ANY ERRAND I CAN RUN FOR YOU ..?
THANK YOU BUT I'M AFRAID NO ONE CAN HANDLE THIS ONE BUT ME.
Lamont Cran
BLAST IT
21

CLUB
MR. CRANSTON, SIR! THAT WAS MUCH QUICKER THAN I EXPECTED, SIR!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, WILLIAM?
WHY, WHEN YOU TOLD ME JUST A MOMENT AGO THAT--
WILLIAM, I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE ALL DAY.
NOW, PLEASE, SIR. I JUST SAW YOU HERE. YOU WERE WEARING YOUR WHITE TUXEDO THEN, SIR.
NOW SEE HERE, WHAT--
--THANK YOU, WILLIAM. AND KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR ANYTHING UNUSUAL, WILL YOU?
YES, SIR.
GUESS WHEN YOU'RE THAT RICH, YOU'RE ALLOWED TO BE CRAZY.
22


Lamont Cranston
BLESK FOLIES
GIRLS! GIRLS! GIRLS!

WHAT IS THIS? ANSWER ME!
BLANG
BAM



YOU ARE A FOOL, LAMONT CRANSTON.

YOU SHOULD HAVE CONTACTED ME!

NEW YORK
TAXI LICENS
739!!P
1987

NEXT: **SWITCHES!**

DC COMICS INC.
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Dear Gerard:

Did you ever think of running for public office? It would be nice to have someone in politics who really delivers on his promises. With THE SHADOW STRIKES! #11 it has become apparent that this is the kind of person you are. You told us that we would get to know the Shadow's agents in a way we never did in the pulps and in this issue you really began delivering on this promise.

The history that you've created for Margo was consistent with what we know about her. With her poor upbringing and her years married to a wealthy stockbroker, we get the combination of class and street smarts that are her trademark.

I also sense a hint of emotional vulnerability, both in her and in Harry. It's easy to trace this with Harry as we know that when the Shadow found him he was going to commit suicide. Now we begin to see the source of this in Margo. Why *did* she run away from home to Chicago?

What really came across this issue was a feeling of how lonely it must be to be one of the Shadow's agents. As time goes on, I think we will see that the lives of most of his agents are marked by tragedy. Let's have Cliff Marsland next, please.

And of course it wouldn't be a Gerard Jones SHADOW story without a bit of a history lesson. I always knew that the Depression of the '30s was brought on, in part, by attempts by brokers to manipulate the market for maximum profit. I never realized, however, that many brokers were indicted for their part in it. All in all, a very effective and satisfying piece of storytelling.

Now, some questions. I can't help but wonder at the motivations of the Shadow in keeping Margo and Harry from "socializing." Of course, I remember Howard Chaykin's miniseries which revealed that Margo and Lamont were sleeping together all those years. I realize that you don't consider yourself bound by that series, but it does make one think. Care to take a stand on this issue, or will you keep us guessing?

And now, a suggestion. The one thing not quite right about this series is that you really don't show the Shadow's abilities. Sure, he can hypnotize, shoot, and beat people up, but there is so much more to him than that. In every pulp novel that I have ever read, there is a scene that displays the Shadow's ability to blend in with his surroundings to trail or spy on his enemies. In other words, let's see the Shadow "shadow" people. If he has a "super-power," this is it.

Now, I'll admit you've shown off his incredible disguise abilities pretty well. But the Shadow also had the ability to imitate anyone's voice (especially over the phone). At times he would call the cops imitating the voice of Commissioner Weston and order them around to suit his own purpose. I think you could have a lot of fun with this ability.

Well, that's all for now. Thank you for what is certainly the best version of the comic book Shadow yet.

Larry Feldman
Denver, CO

The "blending in with his surroundings" shtick works well in the pulps, where Gibson and his comrades could basically just write, "The Shadow used his ability to blend into his surroundings, so nobody saw him in the room." It's much harder to make it work visually. If the reader can see him and the bad-guys can't, then the bad-guys can come off seeming like dufuses...*pardon me,* dufi. *If we can't see him, then I have to write captions saying, "The Shadow lurks in the room, unseen," which is clumsy. I've tried to hint at this ability of our slouch-brimmed friend, with shots of him hanging out on window ledges and eavesdropping unseen. But I probably won't tackle it head-on until I can think of a way to dramatize it clearly. Any suggestions?*

As for your most pressing question...well, I should save it for a story, but I can reveal right now that the Shadow is not currently doing the wild thing with Miss Lane...however, there are a lot of quirky secrets in the pasts of Margo, the Shadow, and Lamont, some of them of a rather sultry nature. We'll be dishing them out to you in future stories.

I'm very glad the glimpses into Margo's past and personality intrigued you. One of the great charms of monthly comics is being able to watch characters grow, interact, and be slowly revealed, and I want to bring that quality to THE SHADOW STRIKES! I'm gratified that reader response to the "spotlight on Margo" issue was very positive, as evidenced by...

* * * * *

Dear Gerry, Eduardo, and Brian,

The sense of the film noir mysteries of the '30s rings true again within these hallowed pages. So Margo doesn't appear to be totally pure in certain eyes, eh? A figurehead for a revenge scheme, it would seem. Oh, man, it must have broken Harry's heart to learn that Margo had been (and truth to tell still is, I would suspect) married. I had never thought of this before, but I'm not really surprised.

One wonders, though, if the Shadow knew all along. I suppose, though, that he does; otherwise there is no reason, other than being a father figure to his agents, for him to restrict fraternization 'tween Harry and Margo.

Considering that Dick Evans is still amongst the living, will he be back? Will the Shadow even acknowledge his existence? Evans would be a good addition to the team.

Report card: do I have to do this? I spoke before about the film noir feeling evident in the story. That alone guarantees an A+ all the way through. Now, about that JUSTICE INC. crossover...

See you in thirty.

Jacob Gilbert
Troy, NY

* * * * *

Dear Shadow-folk,

From a book of mystery, THE SHADOW STRIKES! #11 revealed part of the making of Margo Lane, friend and companion to the Shadow. Of course, this leads to even more intrigue concerning the Shadow's #I agent and himself.

And it's these glimpses of knowledge (and continued knockout covers) that have made the most interesting issues this year.

Melissa Page
Nortonville, KY

* * * * *

Hey, Gang—

THE SHADOW STRIKES! continues its upward climb in quality. The writing, the artwork, the colors...every facet of this title seems to progress in depth with each successive outing. Just when I'm sure these guys have topped out creatively, they come right back with something else. Something better. Something *more* imaginative.

After the just-concluded Shiwan Khan multi-issue saga, "Out of the Past" was a very welcome one-issue breather. Not only did it allow everyone to pause long enough to catch their collective breath, it also provided an interesting look at and into the private life of one of the Shadow's most

loyal, most trusted and most valuable operatives. I really enjoyed it.

Uncle Elvis
Clarksville, TN

It's nice to see Elvis and Melissa together again, since I've come to know them so well as two of the most dependable correspondents with my pet comic book, The Trouble with Girls. *So, what would you two think of the Shadow going up against the Windbreaker, hmm?*

* * * * *

Hey, Guys,

I must compliment Mr. Jones on a great story in THE SHADOW STRIKES! #11. I really like these untold-secrets stories, and I couldn't be happier with the way it was presented.

One small point—the Anastasia/Rasputin reference is getting a little tiring.

Tim Durbin

The Anastasia/Rasputin comments were an effort to drop a little down-home naturalism into the characters. Real-type people are constantly referring to their pasts, interpreting current experiences in terms of what happened last month, being suddenly reminded of that lousy party they got stuck at last Saturday. But comic-book-type people never refer to the past unless they're conveniently foreshadowing the imminent return of a villain. Maybe I need to vary the references a bit, but I like the idea of this kind of chatter between the Shadow and his agents. It makes them all seem a bit more alive.

Now some more general notes...

* * * * *

Dear Agents,

All too often, when a popular character is adapted into comics form,the creative staff take as few risks as possible. After all, why anger and/or alienate said character's devoted following by seeking to embellish his already well-established legend? What we are left with, therefore, is a two-dimensional paper hero.

Your Shadow, I am happy to admit, is the most three-dimensional of heroes!

From the very first issue of THE SHADOW STRIKES! you have taken Condé Nast's property and made it your own. The stories have never failed to excite and entertain me. Especially commendable was your Shadow/Doc Savage team-up. Even better was your "Fireworks" storyline. Shiwan Khan is the best archenemy you've given the Shadow yet, and I hope that he returns soon. He is just too good an antagonist to leave idle!

I have to confess that I am no Shadow expert. I am aware that he has incredible physical abilities and the power to "cloud men's minds." But I did not think that he possessed any of what one would call "super powers."

Still, I have noticed that the Shadow's skill at altering his appearance goes a bit beyond simple make-up. Even his facial structure as Lamont Cranston is radically different from that of the Shadow. Back in the '30s, Superman had the power to temporarily mold his facial muscles in order to resemble almost anyone he wished. Does the Shadow possess this power as well?

Since I haven't seen too many kids running around in slouch hats, red scarves,and black cloaks, I'm assuming they still prefer Batman over the Shadow. And that's a shame, because THE SHADOW STRIKES! is currently better than 'most any tale of the Dark Knight in recent memory.

One final note: Eduardo Barreto's artwork is perfect!

Jon Keyes

Ah, it's so nice to be praised for taking risks and making the Shadow three-dimensional. Since we're following in the wake of an updated, more overtly oddball version of the Shadow, and since we're trying to create a deceptively conservative '30s-style surface, we've been hit with the rap that all we're doing here are straight-ahead, traditionalist pulp adaptations. Yet we're working hard to flesh out this material with subtlety, humanity, and irony. Just when I think subtlety is altogether wasted in this business, I get a nice pat on the head like this letter, and I want to hurry back to work.

To answer your question, the Shadow does have the skill to reshape his facial muscles, which can create an impression of different face-structures. Don't ask me to explain; I can't even wiggle my ears. He's also such a whiz with make-up that no one ever notices that much of his face is putty. That's one of those things you can *get away with in comics.*

* * * * *

That's all for this go-round. Next issue you'll get the explanation of the two Cranstons, the truth behind that wacky Number One, and someone else writing the letters page. 'Bye!

—Gerard Jones

NEXT MONTH:

AT LAST! HE'S THE OFFICIAL GREEN LANTERN OF EARTH...
...BUT SOMEONE KEEPS DOGGIN' HIS TRAIL!
GUY GARDNER IN HIS FIRST SOLO EPIC EVER!
A FOUR-ISSUE STORY IN GREEN LANTERN #9-12
GERARD JONES · JOE STATON · BRUCE PATTERSON

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